

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 2, 2020

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler,

Over the past three months, our families, businesses, and communities have faced significant and unprecedented challenges as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. During this time, we have watched small businesses shutter, health care workers fight to save lives, and the cornerstones of our economy be wary to re-open for fear of being unjustly sued for spreading the virus. Despite these twists and turns, the Judiciary Committee (the “Committee”) – who maintains primary jurisdiction over the myriad of issues currently facing our country – has remained on the sidelines, holding makeshift hearings as “forums” in an effort to operate outside of the House rules.

Over the last week, our communities have witnessed a new level of devastation as our communities mourn the horrific loss of George Floyd. The appalling police brutality that led to George Floyd’s death should outrage everyone, and I support every American’s right to exercise their constitutional right to protest. But what we have witnessed across the nation over the last several days have shown that not all are dedicated to protesting peacefully. Many peaceful protests were overtaken by rioters with the sole purpose of setting our cities on fire. These riots are – literally and figuratively – tearing our country apart.

As we continue seeing instances of police brutality against African Americans and violent riots across the country, the Judiciary Committee has continued to sit on the sidelines, failing to meet its obligations to the American people by holding hearings and taking action to address the underlying problems giving rise to these issues. Since March 1, 2020, the Committee has held one formal hearing at the subcommittee level and none at the full Committee. The one formal hearing the Committee conducted was just another targeted stunt directed at negating the President’s work. The Committee has done nothing to take action related to coronavirus nor to address the recent events surrounding police brutality and the violent riots that have followed. One may think the first hearing the Committee would hold upon its return would concern one of these timely topics. Instead, the Committee is holding a subcommittee hearing on mail-in ballots. While thousands of Americans are showing we can assemble across the country, Democrats are hoping to exploit the coronavirus outbreak to check an item off their wish list.

Rather than holding a hearing to consider the President's recent tweets on mail-in ballots, we should be focusing the Committee's efforts on issues worthy of the American's people time and respect, like addressing police relations within their communities and the seemingly organized effort to riot and loot our cities and towns across America in the name of "justice." As Atlanta Mayor Keisha Bottoms recently said about Atlanta's riots, "This is not a protest. This is not in the spirit of Martin Luther King Jr. This is chaos." While we know these violent individuals setting fire to landmarks and vandalizing monuments do not make up even close to the majority of those peacefully protesting, the actions of a violent few are putting a mark on the peaceful and meaningful protests for justice against police brutality. *As a committee, we should come together to discuss these issues and to investigate how domestic terrorists, like Antifa, are exploiting times of crisis to sow discord among the American people.*

Instead of taking meaningful action, tomorrow we'll be joining a subcommittee hearing on mail-in ballots. Instead of safely sitting across from one another in the Rayburn House Office Building to find solutions to the problems plaguing America, we'll be struggling not to speak over one another on a video conference.

The government's first and foremost priority is protecting the safety and security of its citizens, and right now, our citizens need assurances that they can rest at night knowing that they won't wake up to their neighborhoods burning down. Americans expect Congress to address the issues most critical to them, and if the last several days have shown us anything, folks across the nation are rightfully concerned about the issues of race, justice, and violence currently plaguing our country. Whether its two white men ambushing and killing an innocent black man on an afternoon jog in Georgia to an Atlanta Police Officer being rushed to the hospital after being run over by a violent protestor driving an ATV through the streets of downtown Atlanta, the people I represent are rightfully concerned about the devastation tearing apart our communities, and I know my home state is not the only state dealing with these challenges.

In times of crisis, America looks to its leaders. Instead of hiding behind video conferences, our Committee must get back to work for the American people and demonstrate we are worthy of the office they elected us to. I urge you to immediately schedule hearings on the police brutality and violent protests plaguing our country, and to immediately begin an investigation into the role groups like Antifa play in sowing seeds of discord. The Judiciary Committee has historically been a guiding force in shaping the House's agenda, and it's incumbent upon the Chairman to ensure our Committee schedule reflects the seriousness of the issues our country is currently facing.

Sincerely,



Doug Collins
Member of Congress